



American Planning Association  
**Pennsylvania Chapter**

*Making Great Communities Happen*

# AICP Exam Prep

***Professional  
Development  
Committee***

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*October 2010 APA-PA Conference*



# Today's Agenda

- ❖ Why/What of AICP
- ❖ Eligibility and Application
- ❖ Background and Tips
- ❖ Content

# What is AICP – American Institute of Certified Planners?

- ❖ APA's professional institute
  
- ❖ To be AICP, a planner must:
  - meet requirements for education and experience,
  - pass the AICP exam,
  - pledge to uphold ethical standards (AICP Code of Ethics), and
  - engage in ongoing professional development (Certification Maintenance)



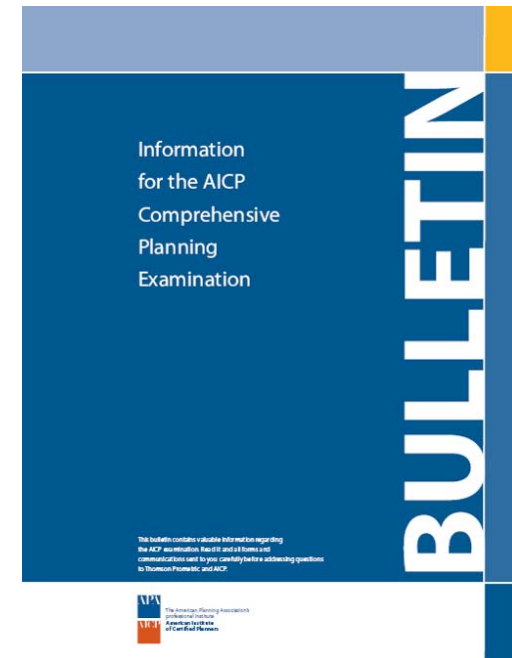
# Why AICP?

- ❖ Demonstration to elected officials, community leaders, and employers of a commitment to excellence
- ❖ Potential employment
- ❖ Salary survey

# Eligibility

- ❖ Current APA member
- ❖ Submit online application meeting education and experience criteria
- ❖ Fee of \$485
- ❖ Pass exam

*APA website –  
[www.planning.org](http://www.planning.org) and the  
Exam Candidate Bulletin for  
all the details*



# Education and Experience Criteria

## ❖ Education

- Graduate planning degree (PAB): 2 years
- Bachelors planning degree (PAB): 3 years
- Graduate planning degree (non-PAB): 3 years
- Other degree: 4 years
- No college degree: 8 years

## ❖ Experience – *Professional Planning as defined by AICP*

- Apply a planning process appropriate to the situation
- Employ an appropriately comprehensive point of view
- Involve a professional level of responsibility and resourcefulness
- Influence public decision making in the public interest

# Education and Experience

## ❖ Verifications!!!

- For degrees and all employment you are claiming as professional planning experience
- Check dates carefully



# Test Windows – 2 weeks

- ❖ May: Application due in January after being open for approximately 5 weeks; response in March
- ❖ November: Application due in July after being open for approximately 5 weeks; response in September
- ❖ Early bird: earlier deadline, earlier notification
- ❖ Approvals (ATT) and incompletes notified by email
- ❖ Denials issued by letter



# Need to know...

- ❖ Schedule on your own with Prometric
- ❖ Approvals are good for 4 exam cycles, but need to inform APA if not taking the exam in the next window
- ❖ APA Exam Bulletin and APA staff for any questions – don't wait until it's too late

# Test Background

- ❖ 170 multiple choice questions, including 20 sample questions
- ❖ 3 ½ hours to complete (brief tutorial before exam)
- ❖ Scoring on a scale, pass rate is approximately 65%
- ❖ Test centers
  - Arrive 30 minutes early for paperwork
  - Take required IDs – make sure name and spelling is matching
  - Calculator/paper/pencil provided
- ❖ Study early and often
  - Identify weak areas
  - Study groups and practice exams
  - Make use of resources appropriate for your background

# Test Content

- ❖ History, Theory and Law – 15%
  - ❖ Plan Making and Implementation – 30%
  - ❖ Functional Areas of Practice – 25%
  - ❖ Spatial Areas of Practice – 15%
  - ❖ Public Participation and Social Justice – 10%
  - ❖ AICP Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct – 5%
- These 3 areas make up 70% of the exam – expect lots of approach & process questions

*Review the APA outline of material*

*Allocate study time according to the APA outline and your own background*

# Sample Question

An urban municipality has received grant funding to restore riparian buffers in order to improve the untreated water quality of the municipality's public water, which is drawn partially from surface waters. Which of the following steps is not necessary to get the project underway?

- A. Research existing databases for information on water quality within the source waters' watershed.
- B. Determine ownership of parcels along all surface waters within the municipality.
- C. Review aerial photography to assess conditions adjacent to waterways within the source waters' watershed.
- D. Research the most effective riparian buffer restoration methods for water quality improvement (such as differing buffer widths and vegetation type).
- E. Contact adjacent municipalities that contain any of the source waters' watershed.

*Answer: B. This exact step is not needed. Determining ownership for certain parcels in the source watershed will likely be needed later in the process.*

# Sample Question

Advocacy planning is associated closely with Paul Davidoff and Saul Alinsky. Which of the following was the significant effect of the advocacy movement?

- A. Assisted single women with children find employment.
- B. Caused social planning to move from back room negotiations into the public forum.
- C. Reduced the need for more environmental documentation.
- D. Created economic stability.

*Answer: B. Questions related to people will not necessarily ask what they wrote or what year it was – they can ask how those people impacted planning.*

# Sample Question

Which of the following court case(s) is/are concerned with takings:

- I. Renton v. Playtime Theatres Inc.
- II. Pennsylvania Coal Co. v. Mahon
- III. Metromedia, Inc. v. City of San Diego
- IV. Agins v. City of Tiburon

- A. I only
- B. II only
- C. I and III
- D. II and IV

*Answer: D. Three points here – one, this is an example of a tiered question. Two, court case questions can be important to mark, or make notes from, since they can overlap somewhat (see next slide/question). Three – this is a simple case law question. See the next slide for a more difficult case law question.*

# Sample Question

The landmark case *Agins v. City of Tiburon* (1980) established a test: a regulation is a taking if it can be shown that it:

- I. Prompts a property owner to file a lawsuit.
- II. Deprives property of all economically viable use.
- III. Creates a nuisance on the affected property.
- IV. Fails to advance a legitimate governmental interest.

- A. I and II
- B. II and IV
- C. II and III
- D. III and IV

*Answer: B. Similar points as the prior slide. One – tiered question. Two – marking (or notes) can help you answer questions due to potential overlap of questions. Three – this is an example of a more difficult case law question, focused on the details of the ruling.*

# Test Tips

# Study Materials from PA Chapter

The screenshot shows a Microsoft Internet Explorer browser window displaying the website for the American Planning Association Pennsylvania Chapter. The page title is "American Planning Association - Pennsylvania Chapter - Microsoft Internet Explorer". The address bar shows "http://www.planningpa.org/career\_aicp.shtml". The website header includes the APA PA logo and the text "American Planning Association Pennsylvania Chapter Making Great Communities Happen". A navigation menu lists "CONTACT US", "ABOUT US", "EVENTS & TRAINING", "LEGISLATION/LAW", "ONLINE SERVICES", "CAREER CENTER", "EDUCATION", and "SECTIONS". Below the menu, there is a section titled "AICP Exam" with a list of links: "About the AICP Exam", "Taking the AICP Exam", "AICP Exam Schedule", "Partial Scholarships", "AICP Exam Study Materials", and "AICP Exam Prep Sessions". The main content area is titled "AICP Exam Study Materials" and contains the following text: "The PA Chapter and its Professional Development Committee have developed a set of study notes to help planners who are preparing to take the AICP Exam. The notes are based on several sources and address case law, theory, planning processes, public participation techniques, urban design, housing, budgeting, growth management techniques, zoning, subdivision and development ordinances, transportation planning, recreation planning, economic development, environmental issues, quantitative analysis techniques, and demographics. The notes are an excellent starting point for someone preparing for the AICP Exam, and were compiled over several years by Lee Slusser and Dave McFarland. In addition to the notes, we have provided a link to study materials on statistics, demographics, and census data prepared by Dr. Kurt Paulsen. Many thanks to those who contributed to these materials." Below this text are several bullet points: "Professional Development Committee Study Notes", "Link to Study Materials Prepared by Dr. Kurt Paulsen", "Practice Questions and Answers developed by Tara Hitchens", "Questions", and "Answer Key". There is also a section for "AICP Exam Preparation Course Presentations" with links to "AICP Exam Prep - Professional Development Committee", "Jennifer Cowley's 2008 PowerPoint Presentation, AICP Exam Review Session", "Planning Ethics", "Scenarios and Discussion Questions", and "AICP Exam Prep - PA Chapter Professional Development Committee". A section titled "APA AICP Exam Study Manual" states that the manual is available to borrow from the PA Chapter of APA. The manual is the 1.0 version however it contains an addendum with the material that was added to the 2.0 version. The manual contains a hard copy text and a CD with questions (note the CD is available with only 1 of the PA Chapter's copies). PA Chapter members \$10.00. Non-members \$20.00. The manual may be borrowed for a three week period. To borrow the manual, complete and return the AICP Exam Study Manual Agreement and Order Form with payment. Questions, contact the Chapter office at info@planningpa.org or 717-671-4510. A section titled "Chapter Presidents Council (CPC) 2009-2010 AICP Study Manual" states that the 2009-2010 CPC AICP Study Manual is available for purchase from the PA Chapter. The manual is on CD. PA Chapter members \$20.00. Non-members \$30.00. To purchase a copy, complete and return the CPC Study Manual Order Form with payment. Questions, contact the Chapter office at info@planningpa.org or 717-671-4510. Quantities are limited so please order early. A section titled "Study Materials from Other States" lists "Colorado", "Florida", "Indiana", "North Carolina", and "Rhode Island". The browser window also shows a taskbar with several open applications: "P:\PDC\AICP Exam Prep\...", "Inbox - Microsoft Outlook", "AICP Exam Prep 0310.ppt", "AICP Exam Prep 0810 w...", and "American Planning As...".

[www.planningpa.org](http://www.planningpa.org)  
**\*\*AICP Exam under Career Center\*\***

- ❖ Prior Prep Session PowerPoints
- ❖ Ethics presentation and scenarios
- ❖ PDC Study Notes
- ❖ How to obtain the CPC Manual
- ❖ Other Chapter information (NC, WA, CO, RI, FL)

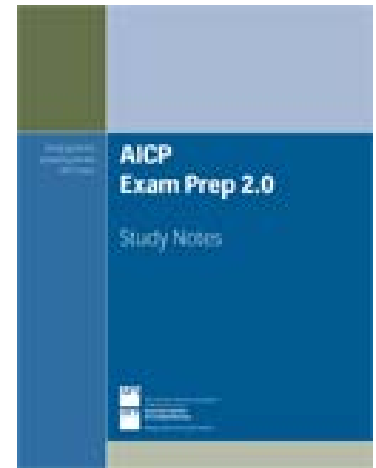




# Test Tips

## Study Materials from APA

[www.planning.org](http://www.planning.org) and [www.planning.org/certification/examprep](http://www.planning.org/certification/examprep)

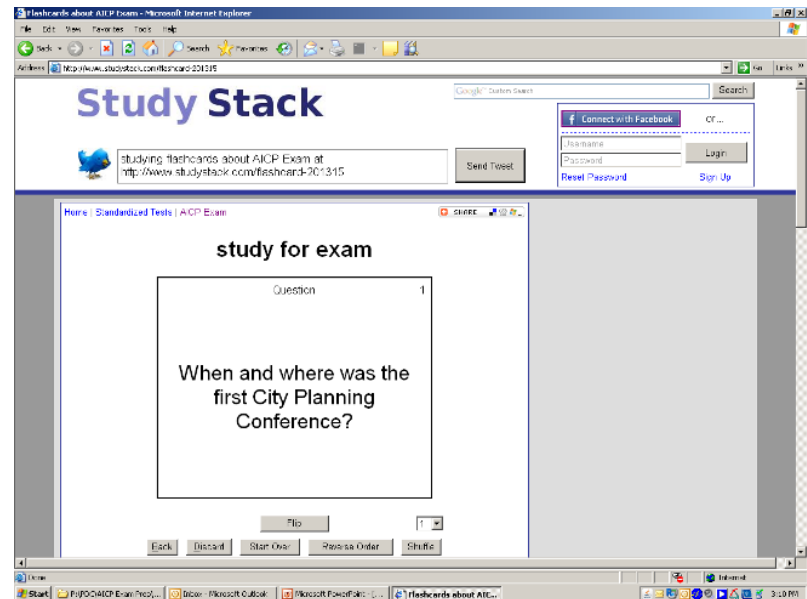


- ❖ AICP Exam Prep 2.0
- ❖ Ethics Code and Information/PowerPoints
- ❖ Policy Guides
- ❖ Top 25s (25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary): Planning Stories, Cases in Planning and Environmental Law, APA Award Winners, Most Significant Planning Laws (1978 – 2003), Individuals Who Influenced Planning Before 1978  
<http://myapa.planning.org/25anniversary> or Google
- ❖ Timeline of American Planning History (or Pathways) – APA website or PDC study notes

# Test Tips

## Other Sources

- ❖ Chapter Presidents Council manual
- ❖ [www.planetizen.com](http://www.planetizen.com)
- ❖ [www.studystack.com](http://www.studystack.com)  
(search AICP)
- ❖ [www.oyez.org](http://www.oyez.org)  
(legal)
- ❖ online forums  
(Colorado Chapter link)



*Practice exams are critical, but don't study the questions  
- pay attention to the format and topic*



## Test Tips

# Comprehensive Study Sources

- ❖ PDC Study Notes
- ❖ PLAN 310 Planetizen AICP Exam Preparation Course (\$129)
- ❖ APA AICP Exam Prep 2.0 (\$195)

*These generally review all topics noted  
in the APA outline of test content*

# Test Tips

# Reading Materials

AICP Certification Exam Selected Readings - Microsoft Internet Explorer

Address: http://www.planning.org/certification/examprep/selectedreading.htm

**AICP Certification**

- November 2010 Exam
- May 2011 Exam
- Post-Exam Information
- Exam Candidate Bulletin
- Exam Preparation**
- Exam FAQ
- Eligibility Requirements

**AICP Certification Exam Selected Readings**

The following list may help planners who are preparing to take the AICP examination. Please note that the readings are presented with two cautions:

- No reading list can span the entire range of material in the AICP exam. As a result, the list is not a substitute for professional planning experience and education. It is not expected that exam takers will have read all the resources cited.
- The readings are intended as guidelines only. The AICP exam questions are not drawn from these readings directly, but are developed from materials of similar content.

**General Reference**

**Books**

Dalton, Linda, Charles Hoch, and Frank So (eds.). 2000. *The Practice of Local Government Planning*. Washington, D.C.: ICMA.

American Planning Association (ed.). 2006. *Planning and Urban Design Standards*. Hoboken, N.J.: John Wiley & Sons.

**APA General References**

*Planning* magazine

*Journal of the American Planning Association*

PAS reports

*Planning & Environmental Law*

Policy Guides

**I. History, Theory and Law**

Brooks, Michael. 2002. *Planning Theory for Practitioners*. Chicago: American Planning Association: (2002).

Campbell, Scott (ed). 2003. *Readings in Planning Theory*. Malden, Mass.: Wiley-Blackwell.

Eisner, Simon, Arthur Gallion, and Stanley Eisner. 1993. *The Urban Pattern* (6th ed). New York: John Wiley & Sons.

Lucero, Lora (ed.). 2005. *Four Supreme Court Land-Use Decisions of 2005*. Planning Advisory Service Report No. 535. Chicago: American Planning Association.

Hall, Peter. 1988. *Cities of Tomorrow: An Intellectual History of Urban Planning and Design in the Twentieth Century*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell.

Irons, Peter H. 1996. *May It Please the Court*. New York: New Press.

Krueckeberg, Donald (ed.). 1983. *Introduction to Planning History in the United States*. New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Center for Urban Policy.

Peterson, Jon. 2003. *The Birth of City Planning in the United States: 1840-1917*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.

**OPTIONS**

New ways for planning officials to partner with APA.

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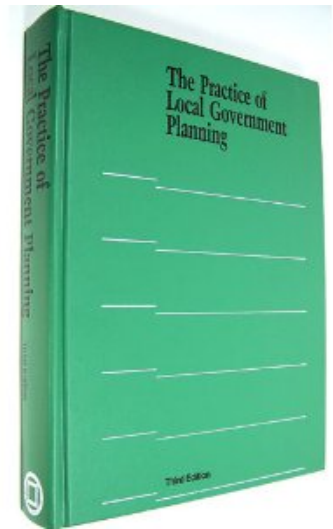
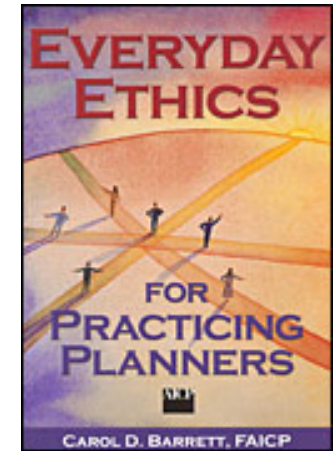
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# Test Tips

- ❖ Get plenty of rest for the exam
- ❖ Dress in layers
- ❖ Eat before the exam
- ❖ Arrive early
- ❖ Answer every question
- ❖ Use the “marking” option
- ❖ Think of answer before reviewing choices
- ❖ Skim answers before reading long questions
- ❖ Do math twice
- ❖ Think national
- ❖ Think APA

# History, Theory, and Law – 15%

- ❖ History of planning – refer to Green Book and Timelines (or Pathways) of American Planning History, know people and events, philosophies and movements
- ❖ Planning law – amendments (1, 5, and 14) and case law
- ❖ Theory of planning - synoptic rationality, incremental, transactive, advocacy, radical, utopianism
- ❖ Patterns of human settlement

# Plan Making and Implementation – 30%

- ❖ Visioning and goal setting
- ❖ Quantitative and qualitative research methods
- ❖ Collecting, organizing, analyzing and reporting data
- ❖ Demographics and economics
- ❖ Natural and built environment
- ❖ Land use and development regulations
- ❖ Application of legal principles
- ❖ Environmental analysis
- ❖ Growth management techniques
- ❖ Budgets and financing options
- ❖ GIS/spatial analysis and information systems
- ❖ Policy analysis and decision making
- ❖ Development plan and project review
- ❖ Program evaluation
- ❖ Communications techniques
- ❖ Intergovernmental relationships
- ❖ Stakeholder relationships
- ❖ Project and program management

# Functional Areas of Practice – 25%

- ❖ Community development
- ❖ Comprehensive or long range planning
- ❖ Development regulation or administration
- ❖ Economic development and revitalization
- ❖ Economic analysis and forecasting
- ❖ Educational, institutional, or military facilities planning
- ❖ Energy policy
- ❖ Food system planning
- ❖ Growth management
- ❖ Hazard mitigation and disaster planning
- ❖ Historic preservation
- ❖ Housing
- ❖ Infrastructure
- ❖ Labor force or employment
- ❖ Land use
- ❖ Natural resources and the environment
- ❖ Parks, open space, and recreation
- ❖ Planning law
- ❖ Policy planning
- ❖ Public services
- ❖ Social and health services
- ❖ Transportation
- ❖ Urban design

*Understand the history, legislative background, terminology, and implementation tools for these topics – and how to plan for them!*



# Spatial Areas of Practice – 15%

- ❖ Planning at national level (environmental, housing, transportation)
- ❖ Planning for multi-state or bi-state regions (TVA, transportation)
- ❖ Planning for state (environmental)
- ❖ Planning for sub-state region (Outer Banks)
- ❖ Planning at county level (hazard mitigation planning, growth management)
- ❖ Planning for urban areas (infill, redevelopment)
- ❖ Planning for suburban areas (old and new, sprawl, infrastructure)
- ❖ Planning for small town (infrastructure, economic opportunity)
- ❖ Corridors (transportation, environmental)
- ❖ Neighborhoods (access to services, walkability)
- ❖ Waterfronts (hazard mitigation, access and economic opportunity)
- ❖ Historic districts or areas (National Register and local)
- ❖ Downtowns (mixed use, signage, events/tourism)



*Why plan at all of these different levels?*

*Because the resource demands it.*

# Public Participation and Social Justice – 10%

- ❖ Public involvement planning
- ❖ Public participation techniques
- ❖ Identifying, engaging, and serving underserved groups
- ❖ Social justice issues, literature, and practice
- ❖ Working with diverse communities
- ❖ Coalition building

*Understand techniques and how they function and when they are best used*

*Know names - Alinsky, Davidoff, Arnstein*

*Understand basic social justice issues and approaches to solving them*

# AICP Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct – 5%

## ❖ Four sections

- **Principles to Which We Aspire** – responsibility to the public, clients, employers, profession, and colleagues, no sanctions for violating
- **Our Rules of Conduct** - 26 rules that you can be sanctioned for violating, many on accurate information and conflict of interest
- **Our Code Procedures** – informal advice, formal advice, charges of misconduct
- **Planners Convicted of Serious Crimes** – automatic suspension of AICP

*Effective June 1, 2005; Revised October 3, 2009. Available on the APA website.*



**“We need to draw the line on unethical behavior.  
But let’s draw it with an Etch-a-Sketch and  
don’t be afraid to shake it a little.”**



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**PA Chapter Professional Development Officer**

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